

I am writing to voice my support for HB 1097. In twenty years of work, first as an elementary school nurse and then as a school district nursing supervisor, I have witnessed a dramatic increase in the number of students who require ongoing nursing support to fully access their education. The movement to mainstream children with a wide variety of medical needs into our public school system has resulted in a corresponding transformation of the professional nurse's role in the school community. The school nurse is involved not only in providing for the daily nursing needs of students, but in assessing ongoing medical needs and working with professional colleagues to design and implement plans that ensure that all students are able to fully access their education.

Nursing is a licensed and certified profession. School nursing is recognized as an area of clinical specialty within the profession. Special Services Endorsement will provide a needed educational standard for entry into school nursing and will recognize school nurses as professionals on equal footing with other educational support professionals. This type of standard already exists in New York, Massachusetts, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. It is time for Connecticut to recognize the evolved role of professional school nurses.

Respectfully,  
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